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# THEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES OF NONVIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Evangelical Advocacy: A Response to Global Poverty

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**THEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES OF NONVIOLENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE  
THLE 616**

**Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University  
January 17-20, 2012  
8:30 AM-5:30 PM**

**Instructor:**

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Blackboard Tutorials: <http://www.eastern.edu/blackboard/index.html>

Blackboard Site: <http://eastern.blackboard.com>

**Prerequisites**

None

**Description of the course**

The Arab Spring (2011) reminded the world both of the power of nonviolence to bring about social change and of the significant costs involved. In this course we will explore the theological

and biblical resources in Christianity that support as well as interrogate nonviolent praxis and aggressive nonviolent direct action. We will discuss the spirituality of nonviolence, alternatives to both passivity and violence, justifications of violence and revolution, coercion, responsibility vs. faithfulness, and the pragmatic realities of refusing to kill people in order to improve one's socio-political-economic situation or in order to protect life.

### Program Learning Goals & Indicators

This course will support the following M.Div. Program Goals & Indicators:

Program Goal	Program Indicator (s)
<b><i>Goal 2: The ability to engage in the reality and the theology of diverse communities [global context of the Christian tradition; intercultural understanding]. (Whole World)</i></b>	2.2 Uses the tools of critical reflection, research methods, interpretation of sources and clear communication in intercultural understanding.
<b><i>Goal 3: A biblically informed and theologically grounded commitment to a Holistic Gospel Witness. (Whole Gospel)</i></b>	3.1 Applies skill in the use of biblical, theological, and ethical tools for ministry, such as language study, research methods, hermeneutics, critical reflection and clear communication.
	3.3 Articulates ability to address personal, social, and global questions and issues biblically, theologically and ethically in ways that lead toward healing and wholeness.
	3.4 Reports/Observes ability to minister with Christian spirit conducive to creating peace and reconciliation.

The complete M.Div. Program Goals & Indicators Table is attached to this syllabus.

### Desired Course Learning Outcomes

The student will be able to:

1. Articulate diverse theological, historical, and political perspectives related to nonviolence and social change.
2. Use sound judgment, creativity and imagination in addressing issues of faith, theology, biblical studies, and political engagement.

- Construct a theologically responsible approach to nonviolence and social change.

### Teaching and Learning Strategies

Class presentations, conversation, lecture, reading, film, writing, and research

### Required Texts and Materials

#### Books, Articles, Audio CD

John Howard Yoder	<i>The Original Revolution</i>	Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998
Walter Wink	<i>Peace is the Way: Writings on Nonviolence from the Fellowship of Reconciliation</i>	New York: Orbis, 2000
John Howard Yoder	<i>The War of the Lamb: The Ethics of Nonviolence and Peacemaking</i>	Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009
Glen Stassen	Articles 1) “Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War” brief explanation; 4) Humanitarian Intervention; 11) Reduces Terrorism Between Palestine and Israel	<a href="http://documents.fuller.edu/sot/faculty/stassen/cp_content/homepage/homepage.htm">http://documents.fuller.edu/sot/faculty/stassen/cp_content/homepage/homepage.htm</a>
Myles Horton and Paulo Freire	<i>We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change</i>	Temple University Press
Gene Sharp	<i>From Dictatorship to Democracy</i> (including the 198 methods of nonviolent direct action)	Available free online - <a href="http://www.aeinstein.org/organizations98ce.html">http://www.aeinstein.org/organizations98ce.html</a>
John Eubanks	“Nonviolence and Social Change”	<i>Journal of Religious Thought</i> , available on blackboard
Sharon Van Gelder	<i>This Changes Everything: Occupy Wall Street and the 99% Movement</i>	Barrett-Koehler Publishers, 2011
<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>Arab Spring: An Interactive Timeline of Middle East Protests</i> (December 2010-present)	<a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline">http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2011/mar/22/middle-east-protest-interactive-timeline</a>

Marshall Rosenberg	<i>Speaking Peace: Connecting With Others Through Nonviolent Communication</i> (Audio CD)	Sounds True, 2003
Sami Awad	“An Evangelical Palestinian Reflection on the Holocaust”	Available on blackboard

### Required Films

*A Force More Powerful*, <http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org/films/afmp/index.php>

*The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, <http://freedocumentaries.org/film.php?id=97>

*Romero*, available on Netflix

*Pray the Devil Back to Hell*, <http://www.praythedevilbacktohell.com/>

*Little Town of Bethlehem*, <http://littletownofbethlehem.org/>

### Highly Recommended Films

*The Mission* (Robert DeNiro)

*Of Gods and Men* (2010)

*Gandhi* (Ben Kingsley)

*End of the Spear* (2005)

*Beyond the Gates of Splendor* (documentary)

### Highly Recommended Books (and see the bibliography)

Anything by Martin Luther King, Jr., especially *Why We Can't Wait*

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers*

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

Each student is required to:

1. Attend class.
2. Read all of the required reading, listen to the audio CDs, and watch all of the required films on schedule with the class to be able to participate fully in class discussions.

3. Write critiques/responses.
4. Write a research paper on an issue related to nonviolence and social change.
5. Take a final exam.

Assignment	Due Date	Weight % of course grade
Critiques/Response Papers	First day of class, January 17 & February 10 (see below)	33%
Research Paper	February 24	33%
Final Exam	March 16	33%
Get arrested and go to jail for just social change	As the Spirit leads....	Justice is more important than grades



### Guidelines for Assignments

1. Critiques/Responses

**On the first day of class, January 17** you will turn in responses to the following books, articles, CDs, and films. You need not summarize the content. Instead, write about what you learned, liked, did not like, what challenged you, and include discussion questions you'd like for us to address in class. Discussion questions for class are essential.

- *The Original Revolution* – 2 page single-spaced response
- *Peace is the Way* – 5 page single-spaced response
- *From Dictatorship to Democracy* – 2 page single spaced response
- Glen Stassen articles – 2 page single-spaced response
- *Speaking Peace* – 1 page single-spaced response
- *A Force More Powerful* – 2 page single-spaced response
- *Romero* – 1 page single-spaced response
- *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* – 1 page single-spaced response
- *Little Town of Bethlehem* – 1 page single-spaced response

**On February 10** you will turn in responses to the following reading and viewing:

- *We Make the Road by Walking* – 3 page single-spaced response
- *This Changes Everything* (van Gelder's Introduction; Naomi Klein's chapter) – 1 page single-spaced response
- *The War of the Lamb* – 3 page single-spaced response
- *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised* – 1 page single-spaced response

## 2. Research Paper – **Due February 24**

Write one fifteen (15) page paper about an issue related to nonviolence and social change (broadly conceived). These papers must be written this semester and not used in any other course. Be sure to write in a logical manner following a well-developed outline. Write about something that interests you. The paper should be written according to University of Chicago/Turabian specifications, be sure to follow these instructions:

- ✓ Use Times New Roman, size 12 font throughout the paper (including cover page and footnotes).
- ✓ Double-spaced
- ✓ Paginate your paper properly.
- ✓ Double space between footnotes.
- ✓ Single space within footnotes.

- ✓ Indent first line of footnotes, not the subsequent lines.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ Write from an outline, include it as a Table of Contents.
- ✓ Include a bibliography, follow proper form.

Deviation from these quite specific guidelines will result in a lower grade. You should purchase a copy of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* and visit <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>.

### 3. Final Exam – **Due March 16**

- The final exam consists of essay questions based on the required reading, films, audio, and selected class material. I will tell you which material will be on the exam. I think that tests are for you to review what you have read, experienced, and learned and should not create anxiety, so relax and review each author's primary arguments and be prepared to reflect on them in writing.

### **Department of Education Requirements for Work per Class**

The Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Association of Theological Schools require a particular number of hours devoted to the learning process in each class.

- **Class time** should consist of 3 hours per week for 14 weeks.
- **Study time** should consist of 6 hours per week for 14 weeks.
- **Total time** devoted to one class should be 9 hours per week for 14 weeks.

This means that if you are enrolled in four classes you are expected to work 36 hours per week on your graduate education.

### **Faculty Expectations**

- **Attendance and lateness:** Please attend every class; please do not be late.
- **Late Work:** Please turn every assignment in on time; each day late will be one half of a letter grade reduction.
- **Paper Submission Process:** Please print each written assignment; please do not email assignments to me.

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<sup>1</sup>This footnote is indented. But if I keep typing then the sentence will carry over to the next line and not be indented.



- **Personal Electronic Equipment in the Classroom:** Please participate in class conversations and do not participate in activities not affiliated with class while in class.

### **Seminary Expectations**

Consult your Student Handbook & the current Seminary Catalog (Online at the Palmer Seminary website) for information about the following:

1. Policy regarding use of Chicago Manual style in all written work
2. Availability of writing tutors
3. Policy on plagiarism
4. Policy on use of inclusive language for human beings
5. Policy on extensions for late work
6. Policy regarding computer-generated papers
7. Grading guidelines
8. Point value of final grades

### **Course Policies**

Please do not hesitate to ask questions or make observations in class. This course is designed with the intent of stimulating faculty and student interaction. Learning, integration of the subject matter, and its application toward life and ministry occur best when done in a context open to conversation.

#### *Readings*

Assigned readings are mandatory and should be completed in advance of the classes for which they are scheduled in the syllabus. Knowledge of the readings will be critical for understanding the lectures and subsequent discussions.

#### *Quality of Writing*

Written assignments should be undertaken as though you were preparing them for publication, even if for publication in your church or denomination. This discipline should help to improve the quality of your writing. I emphasize the quality rather than the quantity of your work. I appreciate and reward good and lucid writing. It is a matter of communication. Clarity and precision of language make communication easier and understanding more pleasurable. I want to enjoy reading what you write.

### *Formal Style of Writing*

All assignments should be typed and written in a formal style, for example, *no* contractions or excessive use of slang. The research paper should include a title page, table of contents, notations (footnotes), and a bibliography or reference list that follow a consistent format for bibliographical references as found in Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*.

### *Inclusive Language*

For the sake of communication, I require that you use inclusive language in all written assignments. By "inclusive" I mean the use of generic terms with reference to both men and women. For example, there are many substitutes which may be used in the generic sense for the words "men," "man," "mankind," and other words that increasingly have more of a male connotation. These include humanity, humankind, human beings, humans, persons, people, all, and everyone. Inclusive language is primarily a matter of clarity. Generic terms (e.g., humanity, people) used along with gender specific terms (e.g., men, women) are more precise. There are other reasons for using inclusive language, not the least of which are theological and ethical. For further information, see Sherlock, *Doctrine of Humanity*, pp. 239-246, or Don Thorsen and Vickie Becker, *Inclusive Language Handbook*.

### *Completion of Work*

You must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. Extended due dates will be granted only in cases of hardship such as hospitalization or emergency absence from class. Unless such a situation arises immediately before a deadline, you may not make arrangements after the fact without receiving a reduction in your grade. A similar policy applies with regard to course incompletes.

### *Academic Integrity Policy*

Graduate students are expected to do their *own* independent work. They should refrain from cheating, copying or plagiarizing the work of others. When drawing from various resources for research purposes, student must provide citations, footnotes (endnotes or parenthetical notations), and bibliographic information. Students may not use an editor for any work turned in under their own name, unless approved in advance in writing by the instructor, and only to the extent approved. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will automatically receive an "F" in the course and may be in jeopardy of expulsion from the University.

The maintenance of academic integrity and quality education is the responsibility of each student at Palmer Theological Seminary. Cheating or plagiarism in connection with an academic program is an offense for which a student will be expelled, suspended, or disciplined. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense which diminishes the quality of scholarship and defrauds those who depend upon the integrity of the educational system.

Academic dishonesty includes:

1. **Cheating:** Intentionally using, or attempting to use, unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
  - Students completing any examination should assume that external assistance (e.g., books, notes, calculators, conversations with others) is prohibited unless specifically authorized by the instructor.
  - Students may not allow others to conduct research or prepare any work for them without advance authorization from the instructor.
  - Substantial portions of the same academic work may not be submitted for credit in more than one course without authorization.
2. **Fabrication:** Intentional falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.
4. **Plagiarism:** Intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

### *Classroom Disruption Policy*

This policy and its title is based upon the findings of the Gonzalez and Lopez study on “student incivility,” which identifies six categories of student incivility and recommends an explicit policy in course syllabi. These are the six categories: disengaged, disinterested, disrespectful, disruptive, defiant, and disturbed behaviors. Behaviors that fall into these categories impede the teaching and learning processes, and undermine the academy. They cannot be permitted whether in the classroom, advisement, or conferencing (learned disagreement with the instructor does not itself constitute incivility.) A pattern of student incivility constitutes sufficient grounds, in and of itself, for dismissal from a course with a failing grade.

### *Assignment Return Policy*

Assignments submitted in class will be graded and then returned in class. Assignments completed at the end of a semester will be placed in the office. No assignments will be mailed to students unless a self-addressed, stamped envelope is provided to the professor.

### *Available Support Services for Students with Disabilities*

Students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact an advisor as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the successful completion of course requirements. Written documentation of the disability, along with a request for accommodation, should be presented to the course instructor at the beginning of the course, or as soon as the disability has been diagnosed.

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## **GOALS & INDICATORS (LEARNING OBJECTIVES) TABLE**

### **For the M.Div. Program Palmer Theological Seminary Student Learning Assessment Process**

<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>Goal 1</b>  A hunger for lifelong spiritual formation &  A commitment to fostering interdependent relationships  (WHOLE PERSONS)	<b>Goal 2</b>  The ability to engage in the reality and the theology of diverse communities; [global context of the Christian tradition; intercultural understanding]  (WHOLE WORLD)	<b>Goal 3</b>  A biblically informed and theologically grounded commitment to a Holistic Gospel Witness.  (WHOLE GOSPEL)	<b>Goal 4</b>  A commitment to service in the church and community to minister to changing times  (WHOLE GOSPEL)
<b>Indicator 1</b>	<b>1.1</b> Articulates an awareness of self in relationship to God by identifying and using a variety of spiritual disciplines and practices	<b>2.1</b> Defines and describes the heritage and traditions of the communities out of which the student comes, in which the student serves, and to which the student relates	<b>3.1</b> Applies skill in the use of biblical, theological and ethical tools for ministry, such as language study, research methods, hermeneutics, critical reflection and clear communication	<b>4.1</b> Articulates a call to a particular area of Christian service
<b>Indicator 2</b>	<b>1.2</b> Develops respect for and ability to partner effectively with others	<b>2.2</b> Uses the tools of critical reflection, research methods, interpretation of sources and clear communication in intercultural understanding	<b>3.2</b> Clearly communicates biblical content and understanding in a variety of ways, e.g. preaching, Christian Education, pastoral care	<b>4.2</b> Articulates and demonstrates biblical and theological foundations for the practice of ministry
<b>Indicator 3</b>	<b>1.3</b> Employs reliance upon connection with God for the purpose of Christian service	<b>2.3</b> Integrates the content of Christian heritage and mission into a personal theology and practice	<b>3.3</b> Articulates ability to address personal, social, and global questions and issues biblically, theologically and	<b>4.3</b> Documents awareness of the impact of oneself in the practice of ministry through

		of ministry	ethically in ways that lead toward healing and wholeness	personal reflection
<b>Indicator 4</b>	<b>1.4</b> Develops a personal confession of faith that demonstrates biblical and theological understanding at a level consistent with seminary education		<b>3.4</b> Reports/Observes ability to minister with a Christian spirit conducive to creating peace and reconciliation	<b>4.4</b> Applies skills in ministry, e.g. preaching, pastoral care, teaching, administering, engaging in mission and evangelism